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New Head for the C. I. A.

President Eisenhower's announcement that he would appoint Mr. Allen Dulles to head the Central Intelligence Agency in place of Gen. Walter Bedell Smith when the latter is confirmed as Under Secretary of State, is cause for applause, although not for surprise. Mr. Dulles is General Smith's logical successor; he has been his deputy in the C. I. A. since 1951, and has been an important influence in shaping the policies of the organization. In World War II, Mr. Dulles made a brilliant record in charge of operations of the Office of Strategic Services in Central Europe, and he has the breadth of view, the appreciation of the human factors involved in intelligence work, as well as the technical experience to fit him for his new post.

The C. I. A. is one of the truly critical points of government in an age which is dominated by the aura of secrecy, espionage and conspiracy evoked by Soviet totalitarianism. The United States, because of tradition of open diplomacy and even more because of its geographical position, was very slow to give even military intelligence the status, the man, power and the equipment which its importance justified. By World War II a number of excellent agencies for dealing with the various problems posed by undercover work—including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the O. S. S.—were developed. But to co-ordinate the activities of all the intelligence services needed to prepare against total war was another matter. The Russians have imposed secrecy on the most routine commercial and industrial statistics, so that a bill of lading or an agricultural report has taken on the color of military information, and none of the dusty files which government agencies habitually accumulate in peacetime may be without significance. Hence the C. I. A. was created as a clearinghouse for the evaluation and consolidation of intelligence from all sources.

To prevent this agency from being swamped by nonessentials, to bring both imagination and cold appraisal to the task of assaying the capabilities and intentions of the secretly malign Soviet empire, is a major responsibility. Mr. Dulles is an excellent choice to shoulder it.

The Other Dulles

Allen W. Dulles' identity has sometimes been blurred in that of his older brother, John Foster Dulles. But the younger Dulles has a personality and a distinction of his own. His knowledge of foreign affairs started in the diplomatic service, and he never lost that interest after he had deserted diplomacy for the law. This he practiced with the New York firm of which his brother was principal partner until 1949. But Allen Dulles made his name in another field—as an intelligence officer in the Second World War. Stationed in Switzerland, he did a notable piece of work, both as a sort of eye and ear of America on Germany, and as the instrument for the surrender of General Kesselring in Italy. Few men accomplished a bigger single service in the nonmilitary field.

Mr. Dulles has now been named to succeed Gen. Walter Bedell Smith as head of the Central Intelligence Agency. The appointment will bring to the National Security Council meetings a man who has been in charge of CIA's clandestine operations. Doubtless he will continue to supervise those operations as part of his larger job of directing the central intelligence service. Recently we made some observations on those operations. There are those who think that the work is an unmentionable as well as an unacknowledgeable, as the French put it—in spite of the fact that one official after another of late has been talking in public about subversive operations. As long as this is done, public comment will be inescapable, and, aside from that, it ought to be the subject of responsible comment so long as we have a free society.

The concern of this newspaper is that "black propaganda" shall not run away either with intelligence work or with diplomacy. This fear has arisen over several episodes. The one in Burma led to the resignation in disgust of one of the best and most respected of our career Ambassadors on the ground not only that he did not go along with the black diplomacy around him, but that he was kept in

ignorance of it. With two brothers in their present association, there should be less danger of one hand of Government not knowing what the other is doing abroad.